

VZCZCXYZ0009
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHFN #0094 0751651
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 161651Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2518
INFO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0295

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 000094

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/W (JHUNTER/ESPRUILL); S/WCI (BDOHERTY)
USUN NEW YORK (MSIMONOFF)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/16/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KAWC](#) [SL](#)

SUBJECT: SPECIAL COURT FUNDING ISSUES REACHES GOSL EARS

REF: MONROVIA 188

Classified By: Ambassador June Carter Perry for reasons 1.4 (b/d)

11. (C) Ambassador met with Foreign Minister Zainab Bangura on March 16 to discuss a variety of pending bilateral issues. Bangura closed the conversation by stating that she had received a letter from the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), informing her of a budgetary shortfall of USD 6 million for court expenses for March through May. The FoMin, with the Attorney General and Chief Justice, will meet with the Court's registrar on March 17 to discuss fundraising options. Bangura expressed some frustration that the government is being called upon to assist with fundraising, saying that they are not adequately informed of the Court's budget and activities (Note: It is likely that the Court does provide information to the government, but that this information does not necessarily reach Bangura. The Ministry of Justice is the Court's primary government interlocutor. End note). Bangura promised to keep Ambassador apprised of any actions undertaken subsequent to the March 17 meeting.

12. (C) Bangura also expressed frustration with comments made by Special Court Prosecutor Stephen Rapp regarding Court funding and the impact a shortfall will have on the Charles Taylor trial (reftel). She said that giving hope to pro-Taylor factions, particularly those believing in his alleged "mystic" powers, could destabilize not only Liberia, but also the sub-region. Ambassador informed Bangura that various U.S. missions, including USUN New York, are aware of the dangers Rapp's comments present, and that the issue will be addressed with him upon his return to Freetown on or around March 24.
PERRY